

CLAIM(S):

1. A portable apparatus for reading file information stored on a separately portable self contained data storage device, the portable apparatus not in communication with a personal computer, the apparatus comprising:

a housing of a size and weight capable of being held in a person's hand;

a drive component for reading the file information on the data storage device;

a loading mechanism for receiving the data storage device and retaining the data storage device such that the drive component reads the file information on command; and

a visual display operably connected to the drive component for viewing the file information contained on the data storage device.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 and further comprising a printer capable of printing the file information retrieved from the data storage device by the drive component.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the visual display is a liquid crystal display.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the drive component is capable of reading magnetic storage media.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the drive component is capable of reading optical storage media.

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6. A portable apparatus for reading a file directory content of a separately portable data storage device, the portable apparatus not in communication with a personal computer, the apparatus comprising:

a housing of a size and weight capable of being held in a person's hands;

a drive component disposed within the housing to read the data storage device;

a display disposed on the housing and connected to the drive component for viewing the file directory contents; and

a printer operably connected to the drive component and capable of printing the file directory contents contained on the display.

7. The portable apparatus of claim 6 wherein the printer is located within the housing.

8. The portable apparatus of claim 6 wherein the printer is an attachable unit.

9. The portable apparatus of claim 6 and further comprising an additional drive component, each drive component capable of reading different types of data storage media.

10. A method of reading file information contained on a portable data storage device, the method comprising:

inserting the data storage device into a loading mechanism of a portable file reader apparatus that is a size and weight capable of being held in a person's hand; and

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viewing the file information contained on the data storage device
through a display screen.

11. The method of claim 10 and further comprising:
activating a print function that enables a printer to print a printout
of the file information; and
attaching the printout to the data storage device.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein the printout is an adhesive label.

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